

Claims:

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising applying an aqueous solution comprising a reducing agent to meat disinfected with an oxidizing germicide, wherein application of the aqueous solution to the meat reduces meat discoloration caused by the oxidizing germicide.
2. A method of claim 1, wherein the reducing agent is selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, ascorbic acid salts, ascorbic acid esters, erythorbic acid, alkali metal bisulfites, metabisulfites, and thiosulfates.
3. A method of claim 1, wherein the concentration of reducing agent in the aqueous solution is between about 0.05% to about 5% by weight.
4. A method of claim 1, wherein the concentration of reducing agent in the aqueous solution is between about 0.1% to about 2.5%.
5. A method of claim 1, wherein the oxidizing germicide is selected from the group consisting of chlorine, chlorine dioxide, peracetic acid, ozone, acidified sodium chlorite and acidified sodium nitrite.
6. A method of claim 1 wherein the aqueous solution is applied to the disinfected meat between about five seconds to one hour after application of the oxidizing germicide to the meat.
7. A method of claim 1, where a water rinse is applied to the disinfected meat before application of the aqueous solution.
8. A method of claim 1, wherein the aqueous solution is sprayed on the meat.
9. A method of claim 1, wherein the disinfected meat is immersed in the aqueous solution.
10. A method of claim 1, wherein the aqueous solution further comprises a wetting agent.
11. A method of claim 1, wherein the aqueous solution further comprises a thickener.
12. A method comprising reducing discoloration of meat treated with an oxidizing germicide by contacting the meat, at a time period of between about five seconds to about one hour after germicide application, with an aqueous solution comprising a reducing agent.
13. A method claim 12, wherein the meat treated with an oxidizing germicide is subjected to a water rinse before contacting the meat with the aqueous solution comprising a reducing agent.

14. A method of claim 1, wherein the meat treated with an oxidizing germicide is sequentially sprayed with, or dipped into, the aqueous solution comprising a reducing agent.
15. A method of claim 12, wherein the meat treated with an oxidizing germicide is sequentially sprayed with, or dipped into, the aqueous solution comprising a reducing agent.